

Union Calendar No. 540

112TH CONGRESS }
2d Session

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

{ REPORT
112-738

FOURTH SEMIANNUAL REPORT ON THE
ACTIVITIES
OF THE
COMMITTEE ON HOUSE ADMINISTRATION
OF THE
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
DURING THE
ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH CONGRESS
TOGETHER WITH MINORITY VIEWS



DECEMBER 31, 2012.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House
on the State of the Union and ordered to be printed

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LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON HOUSE ADMINISTRATION,
Washington, DC, December 31, 2012.

Hon. KAREN HAAS,
Clerk of the House, The Capitol, Washington, DC.

DEAR MS. HAAS: Pursuant to Rule XI, clause 1, paragraph (d) of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, I hereby transmit the Fourth Semiannual Report on the Activities of the Committee on House Administration. This report summarizes the activities of the Committee with respect to its legislative and oversight responsibilities in the 112th Congress from June 2012 to December 2012.

Sincerely,

DANIEL E. LUNGREN,
Chairman.

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FOURTH SEMIANNUAL REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMITTEE ON HOUSE ADMINISTRATION DURING THE 112TH CONGRESS

DECEMBER 31, 2012.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State
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Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California, from the Committee on
House Administration, submitted the following

R E P O R T

together with

MINORITY VIEWS

INTRODUCTION

The Committee on House Administration (“Committee”) is charged with the oversight of federal elections and the day-to-day operations of the House of Representatives. During the 112th Congress, the Committee operated with two subcommittees: the Subcommittee on Elections, which examines issues related to elections and voting systems, and the Subcommittee on Oversight, which focuses on identifying and reducing wasteful spending within House operations and establishing best practices to help improve services to the House community.

OVERSIGHT AND LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMITTEE

Officers of the House

One of the responsibilities of the Committee is to conduct oversight of the Officers of the House, whose organizations serve primary roles in legislative operations and the day-to-day administrative and operational infrastructure necessary to support the Members and staff of the House.

Clerk of the House

The Office of the Clerk is charged with overseeing nine departments including the Office of Art and Archives, the Legislative Resource Center, and the Office of Official Reporters. The Clerk's primary responsibilities involve the legislative activities of the House. This includes managing the bills originating in the House as well as overseeing the voting system.

With help from the Committee, House Leadership, and the Rules Committee, the Clerk has nearly completed phase two of the docs.house.gov project. This involved updating the posting standards of Committee documents in December. As a result of this phase, House committee documents will be displayed online in XML, an open, machine-readable format that improves transparency and access to data.

The Clerk's Office also created a Bulk Data Task Force headed by the Deputy Clerk and House Appropriations staff, and comprised of bipartisan Leadership and Committee staff, administrative staff, and representatives of Legislative Branch support agencies. Staff from the Secretary of the Senate and Senate Sergeant-at-Arms participate in the task force as observers. The task force was created in response to inquiries from the Legislative Branch Subcommittee of the Appropriations Committee. The task force is working to increase the availability of bulk data and reduce duplication and expenses.

Additionally, the Clerk developed a system to capture the financial disclosure requirements necessitated by enactment of S. 2038, the Stop Trading on Congressional Knowledge Act or STOCK Act, on April 4, 2012. On September 30, 2012, after multiple staff and Member training sessions during the summer, the Member and Candidate financial disclosure forms were made available online. Due to the enactment of H.R. 6634, to change the effective date for the Internet publication of certain financial disclosure forms, on December 7, 2012, the employee forms will be posted on April 15, 2013.

Finally, the Committee worked with the Historian's Office on the development of an updated version of the "Hispanic Americans in Congress" publication. In addition to providing book edits and recommendations, on July 17, 2012, Chairman Lungren and Representative José Serrano introduced H. Con. Res. 132, which provides funding to ensure the printing and production of the revised and updated version of the publication. On July 19, 2012, the concurrent resolution was ordered reported favorably by the Committee at a meeting. On September 10, 2012, the House approved the resolution under suspension of the rules.

Sergeant-at-Arms and the United States Capitol Police

The House Sergeant-at-Arms ("HSAA") is responsible for maintaining the security of the House side of the Capitol Grounds and for ensuring the security of Members of Congress, staff, and visitors.

Oversight of the House Sergeant-at-Arms and the United States Capitol Police ("USCP") continued to be a priority for the Committee. In order to receive constant updates regarding security in both Washington and in Member districts, the Committee meets with both the HSAA and the USCP on a bi-weekly basis.

During the period of this report, the Capitol Police Board searched for a well qualified replacement for the retired USCP Chief. On December 17, 2012, Kim C. Dine, the former Chief of Police of the Frederick, Maryland Police Department, was sworn in as the Chief of the U.S. Capitol Police.

The HSAA Office of Emergency Management (“OEM”) section continues its outreach and training to Member offices both in Washington and in the districts, building on the success of the Law Enforcement Coordinator program. It also made great progress in improving the emergency response messaging process.

Chief Administrative Officer

The Office of the Chief Administrative Officer (“CAO”) supports the budget, finance, procurement, facilities, and information technology needs of the House and all of its components. The Committee is charged with overseeing the CAO and its support staff.

Over the past six months, the CAO advanced several initiatives that resulted in House-wide savings of approximately \$800,000 per year. Of particular note were the contract awards to technology support contractors, IT hardware maintenance providers, and systems administration service providers.

Additionally, the Committee consulted with the CAO regarding the 113th Congressional Transition. The Committee approved several transition policies on equipment, furniture, and technology, as well as worked on a comprehensive transition website that will ensure a smooth transition for departing Members, returning Members and new Members.

House Information Resources

Throughout the second half of 2012, the Committee worked with House Information Resources (“HIR”) to improve technological services for the House community. These services include the Active Role Server, Microsoft Exchange 2010, the future of the House Data Center, and the House Digital Mail program.

HIR has enabled all offices to participate in the Active Role Server (“ARS”), a tool to administer network accounts and House email. The Committee adopted a transition policy for the 113th Congress to automatically enroll all freshman Members in ARS. House Information Resources also deployed Microsoft Exchange 2010 to CAO offices in September. This release provides better support for mobile clients and increased user features for offices that have upgraded to Microsoft Office 2010. Exchange 2010 will be rolled out to existing offices in early 2013.

Additional offices have been added to the current House Digital Mail program. Fifty-three offices now participate in the program. The Committee approved a transition policy on October 2, 2012 that authorizes the automatic enrollment of freshman Members in the House Digital Mail Program beginning with the 113th Congress.

Inspector General

House Rule II creates the Office of the Inspector General (“OIG”) and charges the Committee with oversight of the office. During the period of this report, the OIG, with the approval of the Committee, produced four management advisory reports and three audit re-

ports. Additionally, the Committee reviewed and approved the FY 2013 audit and advisory plan.

The Committee also worked with the OIG to create awareness in the House community of several illegal schemes involving newspaper subscriptions and renewals. These notifications prevented payments to unscrupulous vendors.

The Architect of the Capitol

The Architect of the Capitol (“AOC”) is responsible for the maintenance, operation, development, and preservation of the entire Capitol Complex, which includes 17.4 million square feet of buildings and more than 460 acres of land. Certain decisions regarding management of the House Office buildings and the House side of the Capitol reside with the House Office Building Commission, but the Committee supervises and oversees AOC implementation of all its programs.

The Committee met regularly with the House Office Building Superintendent, his senior staff, and other AOC management and staff during the period of this report. The Committee continued to monitor AOC operations, including the American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial, the AOC’s Office of Security Programs, and the Cannon Building renewal and FOB–8 renovations. The Committee continued to assess and ensure that full cooperation and communication occurs between the Office of Security Programs and the USCP, given their overlapping prerogatives.

Office of Congressional Accessibility Services

The Office of Congressional Accessibility Services (“OCAS”) was created by the Capitol Visitor Center Act of 2008. OCAS operates under the direction of the Congressional Accessibility Services Board and is charged with providing and coordinating accessibility services for individuals with disabilities including Members of Congress, officers and employees of the House and Senate, and visitors in the U.S. Capitol Complex. The Committee on House Administration is charged with overseeing the agency and meets with OCAS quarterly.

During the last six months, the Committee met with the OCAS Director on a variety of accessibility issues including New Member Orientation and planning for the 2013 Presidential Inauguration ceremony. There are significant improvements for the Inauguration including: an increase in the number of directional aides, larger handicapped accessible platforms, an increase in the number of shuttles between the Metro and the event site, and a mobile application to view the closed captioning of the event on a mobile device.

The Office of Congressional Accessibility also continued to work with the Committee, the Capitol Visitor Center, the House, and the Senate to ensure accessibility for all individuals visiting or working on the Capitol campus. In 2013, the office will release an audio-descriptive tour for Exhibition Hall, add a set of wheelchairs at each accessible entrance to the Senate and House buildings, and disseminate updated maps, brochures and training materials to Member offices.

Library of Congress and Joint Committee on the Library

The Committee's Subcommittee on Oversight conducted an oversight hearing on the Library of Congress on July 19, 2012, entitled "Library of Congress: 2012 Inspector General Report on Library-Wide Acquisitions". Deputy Librarian Robert Dizard Jr., Chief of Support Operations Lucy Suddreth, and Inspector General Karl Schornagel testified before the Committee's Subcommittee on Oversight. Committee staff held a further oversight meeting with Deputy Librarian Dizard regarding the Library's acquisitions function on October 3, 2012. The Committee will continue to monitor the status of the Library's Contracting Office and acquisitions function.

Oversight staff continued to meet with Library personnel and monitor Library initiatives related to Congress.gov (the beta of which was released September 19, 2012), the National Book Festival (again held for a two-day span in late September), the Residential Scholars Center (the Librarian decided to discontinue the planned renovations), the Library's storage needs, and issues related to its seven respective service units.

The Joint Committee on the Library ("JCL") has no legislative authority but is tasked with oversight of the Library of Congress and the Congressional Research Service, management of the National Statuary Hall Collection, and the United States Botanic Garden. To this end, the JCL approved adjusting the Garden's hours to accommodate the Committee's New Member Orientation program and the replacement of certain CVC tunnel artwork.

The Committee continued to monitor the implementation status of H.R. 6336 (enacted as Public Law 112-174). The law requires the Joint Committee on the Library to accept from the District of Columbia the donation of a statue depicting Frederick Douglass and to place the statue in a suitable permanent location in Emancipation Hall of the U.S. Capitol. The statue is currently in a D.C. courthouse.

Fine Arts Board

The House Fine Arts Board is comprised of five House members of the Joint Committee on the Library. It has authority over works of fine art and historical objects that are the property of Congress and are for display in the House wing of the Capitol or in the House Office Buildings. The Board also accepts gifts of fine art and historical objects on behalf of the House, and the Clerk maintains the collection.

During the period of this report, the Fine Arts Board received a request from Representative John Spratt to organize a portrait fund committee. Further, the Board received the deeds and portraits of Representative Ike Skelton, Representative Ralph Hall, and Representative John Mica. These portraits will be added to the House collection.

Joint Committee on Printing and U.S. Government Printing Office

The Government Printing Office ("GPO") produces, preserves and distributes the official publications and information products of the Congress and Federal government. By House rule, the Committee on House Administration has oversight of and legislative jurisdiction over the Government Printing Office.

The Committee continued to eliminate unnecessary printing by encouraging Member and House committee offices to opt out of receiving printed versions of House publications. As a result, GPO has seen increased usage of its applications for tablet and mobile devices and decreased usage of paper copies. The Committee also worked with GPO to publish a new version of the Pocket Constitution as authorized by H. Con. Res. 90, which passed the Senate on July 26, 2012. For New Member Orientation, the Government Printing Office assisted with all of the Committee's publishing requirements.

The Joint Committee on Printing ("JCP") requested the Government Accountability Office ("GAO") audit the total number of internal printing plants, the total amount of in-plant work produced, and the print procurement practices of all federal departments and agencies.

Each year the JCP reviews and approves GPO's capital spending plan for the coming fiscal year. The FY 2013 submission aligns with GPO's 2013–2017 Strategic Plan and indicates GPO's continued resolve to modernize print production capabilities, invest in the infrastructure and development of its Federal Digital System, and create an integrated web platform for the Federal Depository Library Program. The Joint Committee on Printing approved the request.

Smithsonian

The Committee serves as the primary legislative and oversight body for the Smithsonian Institution, a federal trust instrumentality composed of 19 museums, numerous research centers, and the National Zoo. Governance of the Smithsonian is vested in a 17-member Board of Regents, consisting of the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, the Vice President, six Members of Congress, and nine citizen regents nominated by the Board and approved by joint resolution of Congress.

At its June 25, 2012, meeting, the Board of Regents approved the nomination of Ambassador Barbara Barrett to serve as a citizen regent. H.J. Res. 120, which authorizes the appointment of Ambassador Barrett for a six-year term on the Board of Regents, was introduced on September 13, 2012, by Representative Sam Johnson and cosponsored by Representatives Steven C. LaTourette and Xavier Becerra. S.J. Res. 49, the Senate companion of H.J. Res. 120, passed the House on Thursday, December 20, 2012.

The Committee conducted oversight of the Institution through ongoing discussions, meetings and briefings with Smithsonian staff and the Inspector General on various topics including agendas for the Board of Regent meetings, the annual audit plan, the status of facilities renovations and budgetary matters.

Elections

The Constitution grants the House final authority to judge the election of its members. To give the House firsthand information with which to review a contested election, the Committee is authorized to send observers to close House races to collect data and view election procedures.

The Committee trained House employees to serve as contested election observers to provide the Committee with support in the

event of numerous close House races after Election Day. Observers were requested in five closely contested House races in the 7th Congressional District of California, the 52nd Congressional District of California, the 18th Congressional District of Florida, the 23rd Congressional District of Texas, and the 4th Congressional District of Utah. The Committee sent observers to three of those races.

Observers examined the processes and procedures at registrars' offices in the respective counties contained in the congressional district they were sent to observe. They looked for irregularities or possible concerns in the counting and recounting processes. Observers recorded their observations for the benefit of the Committee in the event the Committee needed those observations in an officially contested election. The Committee also monitored the legal action taken by candidates to preserve their rights in close races.

ADDITIONAL OVERSIGHT ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMITTEE

House Office of Legislative Counsel and Law Revision Counsel Modernization Project

The Committee worked with the House Office of Legislative Counsel ("HOLC") and the Office of Law Revision Counsel ("LRC") on internal modernization projects. The goal of LRC is to maintain a complete, authoritative, accurate, and consolidated version of the U.S. Code. The HOLC portion of the project is focused on increasing the accuracy of legislative language and providing tools for Members and staff to more easily view the effect of amendments on bills and resolutions. The HOLC/LRC Modernization Project was awarded to three vendors whose goal is to produce and maintain the current U.S. Code system in an XML standard format. This project should decrease administrative costs and the time required to draft legislative language.

Congressional Internship Program for Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities

During the period of this report, the internship program had its highest level of participation since its creation. Thirty House and Senate offices participated in the program. Over the life of the program—nine semesters to date—more than sixty-five offices have hosted interns. The Committee intends to continue to build on the success of the program established by Representative Harper.

New Member Orientation

The Committee is responsible for coordinating the orientation program and associated travel and logistics for newly elected Members of Congress and their designated aides. The program was held during the week of November 13–17, 2012, and continued during the week of November 27–December 1, 2012. The bipartisan administrative orientation program included a review of ethics and official resource rules, practical guidance on setting up a congressional office, an overview of procedures on the House Floor, and an introduction to the legislative process.

HEARINGS AND MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEE

The Subcommittee on Oversight conducted an oversight hearing on the Library of Congress on July 19, 2012, entitled, “Library of Congress: 2012 Inspector General Report on Library-Wide Acquisitions”. Testifying before the Committee’s Subcommittee on Oversight were Deputy Librarian Robert Dizard Jr., Chief of Support Operations Lucy Suddreth, and Inspector General Karl Schornagel.

LEGISLATION WITHIN THE COMMITTEE’S JURISDICTION CONSIDERED BY THE HOUSE

On July 19, 2012, the House considered H. Con. Res. 133, authorizing the use of the rotunda of the United States Capitol for an event to present the Congressional Gold Medal to Arnold Palmer, in recognition of his service to the Nation in promoting excellence and good sportsmanship in golf. By unanimous consent, the House agreed to the concurrent resolution. On July 26, 2012, the Senate agreed to the concurrent resolution by unanimous consent.

On August 1, 2012, the House considered H. Con. Res. 135, authorizing the use of the rotunda of the Capitol for the presentation of the Congressional Gold Medal to Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, in recognition of her leadership and perseverance in the struggle for freedom and democracy in Burma. The House agreed to the concurrent resolution by unanimous consent.

On August 2, 2012, the House passed S. 3510, a bill to prevent harm to the national security or endangering the military officers and civilian employees to whom internet publication of certain information applies, and for other purposes. The bill had been passed by unanimous consent in the Senate earlier that day. On August 7, 2012, the bill was signed by the President and became Public Law 112–173.

On September 10, 2012, the House considered H.R. 6122, to revise the authority of the Librarian of Congress to accept gifts and bequests on behalf of the Library, and for other purposes. The bill was passed by the House under suspension of the rules by a vote of 377–0.

On September 10, 2012, the House considered H.R. 6336, to direct the Joint Committee on the Library to accept a statue depicting Frederick Douglass from the District of Columbia and to provide for the permanent display of the statue in Emancipation Hall of the United States Capitol, under suspension of the rules. The House passed the bill by voice vote. On September 12, 2012, the Senate considered the bill and approved it by unanimous consent. On September 20, 2012, the President signed the bill and it became Public Law 112–174.

On September 10, 2012, the House considered H. Con. Res. 132, providing funding to ensure the printing and production of the authorized number of copies of the revised and updated version of the House document entitled “Hispanic Americans in Congress”, and for other purposes, under suspension of the rules. The House agreed to the concurrent resolution by voice vote.

On September 19, 2012, the House considered H.R. 5912, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to prohibit the use of public funds for political party conventions. On motion to suspend the rules, the House passed the bill by a vote of 310–95.

On December 20, 2012, the House considered S.J. Res. 49, to authorize the appointment of Ambassador Barbara Barrett for a six-year term on the Smithsonian Institution Board of Regents. The House agreed to the joint resolution by unanimous consent. The joint resolution had been agreed to in the Senate by unanimous consent on August 1, 2012.

MINORITY VIEWS OF RANKING MEMBER ROBERT A. BRADY

REPUBLICAN DEFENSE OF MARRIAGE ACT FIASCO ESCALATES

As these views were being drafted, with virtually the entire federal government facing spending cuts from the “fiscal cliff” and possible sequestration, the Republican Leadership evidently still believes that the best use of precious taxpayer dollars is to spend upwards of \$2 million in an attempt to defend discrimination.

During the second half of the congressional session, the Committee arranged a secret funding increase to the contract entered into by the Bipartisan Legal Advisory Group (BLAG), controlled by the House Republican leadership, in a so-far losing crusade to protect the “Defense of Marriage Act” (DOMA) in Federal court.

Since the initial contract entered into at the direction of the Speaker, Majority Leader, and Majority Whip, without consultation and input from the CHA Minority, we have been vocal about the process, costs, lack of input, and transparency.

The latest contract modification was entered into on September 28, 2012, yet the Majority waited three months to share with the Minority the revised contract. The Majority has raised the cap of the DOMA contract twice: first on Sept. 29, 2011, from its original maximum of \$500,000 to \$1.5 million, and again on Sept. 28 to its new maximum of \$2 million.

Earlier this year the Chief Administrative Officer for the House testified that the House tapped \$742,000 from the legislative branch budget—specifically, from the “salaries, officers and employees” account—to cover DOMA related expenses. There has been no explanation of where the rest of these funds are coming from or how the money is being budgeted particularly given the potential spending cuts that the House faces.

Yet more wasteful spending is likely in the 113th Congress as the DOMA case is heard by the Supreme Court.

GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

As always, the Democratic Members laud the dedicated men and women of the Government Printing Office (GPO) for the excellent work they perform every day in support of the American people, and especially for the Congress. Neither the House of Representatives nor the Senate could discharge its constitutional duties without the support of the GPO, which prints our bills, resolutions, hearing transcripts, the *Congressional Record*, and other documents enabling the legislative process to function. The GPO provides a multitude of related services, including web composition and support enabling constituents to become informed about what the government is doing through the miracle of information technology.

For the past year, Deputy Public Printer Davita Vance-Cooks has acted as Public Printer following the refusal of a handful of senators to permit a vote on the President's nominee and subsequent recess appointee, William (Bill) Boarman of Maryland. Although we believe strongly that they gravely erred in blocking Mr. Boarman's confirmation, we have only praise for Ms. Vance-Cooks, the first African-American ever to lead the agency. Under her stewardship, the GPO has turned numerous challenges into opportunities and the agency is in great shape for the future.

GPO's recent accomplishments include ending fiscal year 2012 with a positive net income, a monumental achievement when agencies are cutting their printing. GPO also slashed overhead to fiscal 2008 levels, in part by staging a targeted buy-out for employees in key areas. Ms. Vance-Cooks, and Mr. Boarman before her, also focused efforts to collect millions due from agency customers for work already performed and simultaneously enhanced business processes to prevent billing errors and disputes from arising in the first place. These and other steps enabled the acting Public Printer to submit a flat ("no-increase") budget to Congress for fiscal 2013.

In addition to these fiscal successes, GPO has lately reconfirmed its expertise in digital media by releasing mobile "apps," beginning with a guide to Members of Congress and an award-winning app on the federal budget. GPO also collaborated with the Library of Congress on the development of a *Congressional Record* app for the Apple devices and has since released apps on Presidential Papers and for the quadrennial "Plum Book" listing key jobs in the Executive branch. GPO has achieved these great things while working with the State Department on development of the next generation of U.S. passports and expanding GPO's penetration of the growing federal market for "smart" cards and other secure documents.

We note the recent appointment of a new GPO Inspector General, Michael Raponi, who has already demonstrated his office's value by promptly examining GPO billings associated with House committees and finding no major problems. We greatly appreciate GPO's continued support and guidance for Congress' "COOP" (continuation of operations) planning as well as its recent establishment in Mississippi of redundant capacity for smart-card production. We are grateful that GPO management is offering surplus office and warehouse space to the Senate, the Architect of the Capitol, the U.S. Capitol Police (USCP) and other agencies to make the greatest use of its physical plant on North Capitol Street and thereby ease the burden on the beleaguered taxpayer.

While much has been achieved, we recognize the need for this committee to work together with the majority on two legislative projects. First, we remain interested in seeing the GPO Police merge with the Capitol Police. We believe that consolidating GPO into the Capitol Police's operational framework (GPO is already within USCP's extended physical jurisdiction) makes sense from a security perspective and from a cost perspective; it is more compelling since USCP leases space from GPO, stores key equipment and posts USCP personnel there already. The merger process could be painless; the 2009 merger of the Library of Congress Police into the USCP has drawn a "road map" for GPO, USCP and the Committee on a smooth implementation.

Second, the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP) remains of vital importance to the American people. The program, authorized in 1962, was obviously designed years before the internet existed and vast quantities of federal information were created and stored in electronic format. We are interested in working with the majority, the Public Printer, the Superintendent of Documents, and other stakeholders to find a balance between the needs of libraries and their patrons and the government's need for preservation and dissemination of public information. There has been no serious attempt to reauthorize the FDLP since 1998, and it shows.

Last year, the appropriations committees mandated a third-party examination of the need for GPO and the viability of its business model for the future. The examination, conducted by the National Academy of Public Administration, is nearing completion. We look to NAPA's findings and recommendations.

VOTING RIGHTS AND FAIR ELECTIONS

The Committee on House Administration took no action on any significant legislation in the 112th Congress to enhance the voting rights of Americans or to improve election administration in the states by amending HAVA, reauthorizing the Election Assistance Commission or through other means.

Planning ahead for the 113th Congress, in December 2012 members of the House Democratic Caucus formed a task force designed to confront the pressing issues of the role of money in politics and the shortcomings in current election administration. The task force, titled D.A.R.E.—Disclose, Amend, Reform, Empower—consists of the following action areas:

DISCLOSE

During the 111th Congress, House Democrats introduced H.R. 5175, the DISCLOSE Act, in an attempt to blunt the toxic effects of unlimited outside spending. The DISCLOSE Act aimed to ban certain contributions from government contractors and foreign nationals as well as strengthen disclosure requirements for corporations, tax-exempt charitable organizations, political organizations other than political committees, and registered lobbyists. While H.R. 5175 passed the House on June 24, 2010, by a vote of 219–206, the bill was not able to secure enough votes to overcome a Senate filibuster.

In the 112th Congress, H.R. 4010, the DISCLOSE 2012 Act, was introduced to pick up where the earlier bill left off. While differing in some aspects, H.R. 4010 retains the disclosure requirements of H.R. 5175 and strengthens the “*Stand by your ad*” requirements of the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act of 2002, casting further light on who is funding our elections. H.R. 4010 also expands the period for which certain communications are treated as electioneering communications, requires disclosure to shareholder, members, or donors of certain campaign-related disbursements from covered organizations. The Majority refused repeated requests to hold hearings or a committee markup on H.R. 4010.

AMEND

The Democrats on House Administration support efforts to blunt or eliminate the toxic effect unlimited outside contributions have on our democratic process. Since the Supreme Court upheld unlimited independent political expenditures in their *Citizens United v. FEC* decision with a constitutional rather than statutory interpretation, amending the Constitution is the clearest but most cumbersome way to undo the damage. States continue to pass resolutions calling on Congress to pass a constitutional amendment rejecting *Citizens United*, while Members of Congress introduce joint resolutions to amend the Constitution in the House. None have been acted upon.

REFORM

While reversing the detrimental effects of the *Citizens United* and the SuperPAC-creating *SpeechNow.org v. FEC* decision is critical to restoring integrity to our elections, it is equally important to engage citizens. By encouraging small-dollar donors to engage in the political process and eliminating candidate dependence on a small number of high-dollar contributions we can maximize participation while limiting the influence currently wielded by a small number of well-heeled donors.

Incentivizing political contributions at the grassroots level can be accomplished through tax credits, deductions, voucher systems, or some combination thereof. When used in conjunction with a contribution-matching system, citizens are not only given a tangible incentive to make political contributions but are also provided with a means to amplify their effect, thereby reducing some of the volume created by massive contributions.

EMPOWER

The constitutionally-protected right to vote is the cornerstone of any democracy and attempts to contract the franchise should be met with the utmost amount of resistance and scrutiny.

Following the 2010 election cycle, an unprecedented wave of voter suppression legislation was introduced in states across the country by Republican governors and state legislators. While the highest profile tactic employed was in the form of strict voter ID laws, states also tried, and in some cases succeeded, in drastically reducing early voting periods and placing new arbitrary restrictions of voter registration efforts. But on election day, voters participated in near record-numbers and waited in line for many hours to counter efforts to discourage them from appearing or casting ballots. The courts blocked or temporarily delayed offensive provisions in a number of states. However, the danger to the democratic process persists.

During the 112th Congress, Representative John Lewis introduced H.R. 5799, the Voter Empowerment Act (VEA), a comprehensive electoral reform bill designed to maximize access to the ballot for eligible voters. Among other provisions, the VEA modernizes and simplifies the voter registration process, mandates early voting periods, ensures all properly cast ballots are counted, and provides for the better training and recruitment of poll workers.

The 2012 election was not without its share of correctable problems. According to the Brennan Center at New York University, reported issues that affected and potentially disenfranchised voters on Election Day were:

- Registration problems: 21%
- Polling place problems: 21%
- Absentee voting problems: 12%
- Voter ID problems: 11%
- Voting equipment problems: 8%
- Poll worker problems: 8%
- Voter intimidation: 7%
- Other: 12%

It is critical the Committee take action in the future to ensure such easily correctable problems do not disenfranchise even one eligible voter.

CONTESTED ELECTIONS

The Committee on House Administration Democratic staff trained dozens of House staff volunteers to serve as observers of close elections should they be requested by either candidate. A joint determination is usually made by both the Republican and Democratic staffs on the necessity of sending observers. These observers are sent to fact-find and gather evidence to be considered should the matter become a contested election before the House pursuant to the Federal Contested Elections Act. The Committee has the Constitutional authority to resolve House election contests under the powers delegated by the House under the Constitutional authority of Article 1, section 5, which calls on each house to have the power to judge its elections.

Six staff were sent to observe the following congressional races for the 113th Congress:

- 7th Congressional District of California; winner—Ami Bera (D)*
- 52nd Congressional District of California; winner—Scott Peters (D)*
- 18th Congressional District of Florida; winner—Patrick Murphy (D)*

None of the close races from the November, 2012, election resulted in any contests being filed with the House of Representatives.

GERRYMANDERING THE PRESIDENCY

After the 2012 general election, stories appeared in the press about plans by Republican governors, state legislators, party officials, interest groups and wealthy donors to tamper with the Electoral College to inflate the vote for future Republican presidential candidates. Using their domination of state governorships and legislatures achieved in the 2010 elections and enhanced by subsequent gerrymandering of state legislative and congressional seats, Republican legislation was being prepared in several states traditionally carried by Democratic presidential candidates, including President Obama in 2012, to move to a system where electoral votes were awarded by congressional district, a system currently employed only in Nebraska and Maine.

If this system had been in existence in 2012, a majority of the electoral votes in a number of states, such as Pennsylvania and Michigan, would have gone to Mitt Romney even though he lost the statewide popular vote by a wide margin. Gerrymandered congressional districts would have distorted the presidential vote even further than the current Electoral College system, which had elevated the popular vote loser, George W. Bush, to the presidency in 2001.

Since it is the Congress which ultimately counts and determines the validity of electoral votes cast and declares the winners of the presidential and vice presidential contests, there is a role for the House—and our Committee—in evaluating such state policies.

CRISIS MANAGEMENT

Hurricane Sandy had a dramatic impact on the northeastern United States just days before the 2012 general election. Some states, particularly New York and New Jersey, experienced prolonged periods of blackout as well as thousands of displaced residents, with polling locations converted to use as emergency shelters.

State governors issued executive orders allowing displaced residents and emergency workers to cast a ballot via email or fax using a system already in place for overseas voters, and allowing displaced voters to vote by affidavit at any polling location in the state. The House Administration Committee should consider what further steps can be taken to ensure emergency contingency plans are in place in the event of a future disaster which occurs so close to an election.

TRANSITION

The Committee on House Administration is continuing to oversee the transition to the 113th Congress. For the bulk of 2012, committee staff has worked with staff of the Architect of the Capitol, the Chief Administrative Officer, and the Clerk to ensure a smooth transition. This year's transition has been further complicated by the congressional redistricting that resulted from the 2010 Census. The Committee will need to monitor and review policies enacted with regards to redistricting to assess their effectiveness.

The primary functions of Congressional transition occur within the offices of the Chief Administrative Officer and the House Superintendent. As departing Members leave, all the activities associated with closing an office are facilitated by various departments. Mirroring this, the House prepares to support the offices of the newly elected Members. For those both incoming and departing, processes concerning payroll, billing, security, mail, telecommunications, inventory, contracts and records management must be coordinated. Notably, 222 House office moves will occur this year, all scheduled for completion prior to the beginning of the 113th Congress.

ROBERT A. BRADY.